III.—CYCLONE HAVOC IN THE STATE.

MR. SPEAKER:—" The Hon. the Chief Minister will make a statement regarding the cyclone havoc and what steps the Government have taken to relieve distress."

* THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI:—" Sir, hon. Members are aware of the violent cyclone calamity that has overtaken our State this week. The cyclone operated from 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. on the 30th November in the Tanjore district and between 3 p.m. and 10 p.m. in the Tiruchirappalli district. Not only thatched houses, but also the roofs of Mangalore tiled houses were swept off so to say. Very many mud houses and weak structures collapsed. In Mannargudi taluk alone, about 5,600 mud houses and huts were damaged. The storm created havoc among a very large number of avenue and other trees which were uprooted and tore aside and twisted telegraph and electricity posts, seriously impairing the electricity supply to the large towns of Tanjore, Nagapattinam and Tiruchirappalli, and interrupting both telegraphic and telephonic communications. The high wind also caused very severe damage to betel vines and coconut plantations and to the sugarcane crop in the wet fields. (Interruption.) The paddy crop as such escaped damage except in the coastal belt of Nagapattinam taluk where salt water swept over a five-mile belt. Fodder which was stored in this area was also seriously damaged. An idea of the damage can be gauged from the fact that in Tanjore taluk alone 14 human lives were lost, 1,360 heads of cattle killed, and 19,300 huts damaged. The damage in wet lands of the taluk to betel vines and sugarcane extends to 511 acres and the damage in dry lands to coconut, casuarina and other dry crops covers 4,750 acres. Over and above this, a heavy rainfall of 3½ inches followed on the 6th December, which added to the misery of the inhabitants. The bunds of certain streams and canals breached. Certain low-lying hamlets in the villages of (the names of which are here but probably most hon. Members may not know), Palliari and Vennalodi had to be evacuated, and the men had to be taken to Tanjore for shelter. It is also feared that Vennar may breach at any time, and the P.W.D. are specially protecting the banks at Gudalur village. In Tiruchirappalli district the ferocity of the storm was not so great and the severity of its incidence was confined to the Pudukottai division. Lalgudi and Musiri taluks escaped with damage to trees and heavy loss to plantains, sugarcane and betel vines. In Karur division, in addition to the heavy rain, there was damage to a few huts and the horsegram crop suffered. The plantain gardens in the Kulitalai taluk and a part of Karur have suffered very badly. There was only one death in the area. In the Pudukottai division, Kollathur and Alangudi taluks suffered terribly. In Kollathur 13 lives were lost and 3,920 heads of cattle killed; 1,424 huts were damaged. In Alangudi, according to reports received, 17 lives were lost and 2,253 heads of cattle killed. Nearly, 3,000 huts were damaged. Tirumayam taluk escaped lightly with 3 deaths and 67 heads of cattle killed. In

3-10 p.m.

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Tiruchirappalli district the damage to the standing plantain crop extended to 750 acres in Musiri, 1,000 acres in Kulittalai, and 3,000 acres in Tiruchirappalli taluk. It may extend to another 2,000 acres in Lalgudi and Karur taluks.

" The damage in Kumbakonam, Tanjore and Nannilam taluks of the Tanjore district has also been reported. In Tanjore district the total loss of life was 134, Nagapattinam taluk alone 25. The total figure for the various taluks is said to be 134.

" Apart from this, road communications were completely cut off in many places on the 30th November, but the roads from Nannilam to Nagur, Tiruvarur to Mayuram, Tanjore to Pattukkottai, Tanjore to Tiruvayar, Tanjore to Tiruchirappalli, and Tanjore to Tirukkattupalle have now been completely cleared. The extent of the damage can be gauged from the fact that many pucca buildings, some schools, and even some of the officers' bungalows in Tanjore town were affected. The Tuberculosis Sanatorium sustained serious damage. In Nagapattinam due to the tidal wave the sea-water flooded the local Government hospital and catamarans were washed inside the town. The in-patients of the hospital and others were rescued and removed to places of safety with the help of the Fire Services Staff. The Collectors of the two districts and the Revenue Divisional Officers have been very active touring their districts despite the difficulty of communications, and arranging for immediate relief of distress by way of poor feeding and providing shelter for the homeless. Building materials are urgently necessary, but there are no appreciable reserves or panchayat forests in the district from which people could be permitted to cut and remove building materials. However, non-official relief committees have been formed in some towns, and a District Cyclone Relief Committee is being formed both in Tanjore and Tiruchirappalli. The Government have already placed funds at the disposal of each Collector for administration of urgent relief by way of grants without limit according to their discretion. Collectors have rushed timely supplies to Nagapattinam and Nannilam taluks which were cut off by inundation of the sea.

" Both these districts and the unfortunate inhabitants are slowly recovering from the effects of the severe blow dealt by Nature, and every attempt is being made both by official and non-official agencies to help them towards the recovery of normal conditions. I have asked my officers to tour in those areas as we ourselves are unable to go there now."

* RAJA MUTHIAH CHETTIYAR OF CHETTINAD :—" Sir, I would like to know from the Government whether it would not be desirable to allot to us a day to discuss the distress that is now prevailing in these two districts. Particularly Members representing Tanjore and Tiruchirappalli districts have now a more accurate knowledge than the Government have. They would like to place their views before the Government for their consideration. It is not in a spirit of criticism I say this. I myself wanted to give notice of an adjournment motion, but in deference to your advice,

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I did not; and the Government also have now made a statement. I want to make this suggestion that the Government should allot half a day or one day either to-day or to-morrow or in the near future to discuss about this havoc caused by cyclone. As the matter is very important, we feel that relief measures should be much more. I am very glad to learn that funds are placed at the disposal of the Collectors, without limit. But the trouble is that unless the Government ask the Collectors to spend much more, they would not spend."

* SRI T. VISWANATHAM:—" Sir, we see from the Hon. the Chief Minister's statement and also from reports in the newspapers that Tanjore and Tiruchirappalli districts have been seriously afflicted by the cyclone. Whether or not there is a debate here on this cyclone havoc, on behalf of the K.M.P. party I wish to extend the sympathies of my party to all those who are in distress, to the bereaved families, and to those who have been rendered homeless and shelterless in those areas."

* SRI P. RAMAMURTHI:—" Sir, the entire House extends its sympathy to the distressed population in those two districts. It is very necessary that we should discuss the extent of the havoc and also the measures that we propose to adopt. I know of course the difficulties of the Government in the matter. It is very necessary to mobilize all non-official help in this matter. In order to do this, it is necessary that we should have a discussion on this subject. We ask for a debate not out of a spirit of carping criticism. But it is only to see that the people who are suffering tremendously on account of this cyclone do get immediate succour. The Government probably do not have full reports in the matter. In fact as I was listening to the statement read out by the Hon. the Chief Minister, I found that the particular place where the biggest damage had been caused by the cyclone, namely, Nagapattinam town, did not figure much in the statement. (Interruption.) Possibly the Government may get fuller reports in the course of to-day or to-morrow. Therefore I suggest that the Government might allot to us half a day for discussion of this subject in the course of this week. In the meantime, we also will get reports from those two districts. We are not posted with all the information. Some of the Members have gone to those places to find out what exactly is the damage and they will tell us the real position shortly. We can then discuss this subject and put our heads together in devising suitable relief measures."

THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI:—" Sir, I express my appreciation of the sentiments voiced by the hon. Members and gratitude for the spirit in which their remarks have been made. 3-20 p.m.

" As regards discussion over this matter, I think the hon. the Leader of the Opposition Sri Ramamurthi has put it very clearly and correctly. We have to wait a little and get more information. Mere discussion, especially if it is premature and without full information, can hardly avail. I might inform the hon. Members

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of the House that every effort is being made to restore communications and to get information correctly and fully and to do everything that is possible, both officially and non-officially. I have also, I might inform the House, requested my non-official friends to go up there at once so as to see things with their own eyes and to give us advice, apart from official advice that we will get in due course. I might also again mention that as an extraordinary case, I have cut out the ceiling and I have told Collectors to exercise their full discretion without any limits and without any fear in doing all that is necessary for relief of immediate distress.

"If necessary, we may certainly arrange for a discussion as soon as we get full information."

MR. SPEAKER:—"I pass on to the next item on the agenda. The hon. Member Dr. Varadarajulu Naidu will now speak."

IV.—NON-OFFICIAL BUSINESS.

RESOLUTION.

APPOINTMENT OF TRANSLATORS TO TRANSLATE THE PROCEEDINGS IN THE ASSEMBLY—*cont.*

* DR. P. VARADARAJULU NAIDU:—"Mr. Speaker, Sir, I wish to say a few words about the demand for the appointment of translators to interpret speeches made in the House to persons not acquainted with the languages in which they are made. As I have been in the fortunate position of being able to understand all the languages spoken in this House, I have come to realize the importance of the demand. There is a good deal of force in what has been said and nobody can deny the reasonableness of the demand. But while I was listening to the speeches made on this Resolution, I was wondering why we were drifting away from our ancient path. We have been together not only in this House but the Telugus, Malayalees, Tamilians and Kannada people have been together for centuries, long before the British took over the administration of this country. It is strange that we now come to say that we are not able to understand when a Telugu speech, or a Tamil speech, or a Kannada speech is made. All the languages that are spoken in South India have a common parenthood. They all come from the same Dravidian stock and the root is the same and also the grammar is the same. If the hon. Members talk slowly and distinctly, I am sure most of the Members can understand all the languages. So far as Malayalam is concerned, there may be a little difficulty for the people from Andhra Desa to understand it. We have been together for over 250 years during the administration of the Vizianagaram Empire in South India and we were together about a thousand years ago during Raja Raja Chola's administration over the Andhra country. About 50 per cent of the words used in all these languages have come from the same stock and if only we pay a little more attention, we can understand the whole speech, at least the substance